

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 CAPE T 01165 01 OF 02 121032Z
ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY CAPE TOWN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7445
INFO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 CAPE TOWN 1165

EXDIS

FOR AF AND S/AS FROM AMBASSADOR

DEPT PASS OTHER POSTS AS DESIRED

E.O. 11652: XGDS-3
TAGS: MNUC, APRM, SF
SUBJ: US-SOUTH AFRICAN NUCLEAR TALKS

REF: (A) CAPE TOWN 1162, (B) STATE 144585, (C) PARIS 18364,
(D) STATE 143861

1. COMMENTS ON MAJOR POINTS MADE BY SOUTH AFRICANS TO
FRENCH MFA NUCLEAR NONPROLIFERATION ADVISOR ANDRE JACOMET
PER REFS (C) AND (D) ARE MADE BELOW WITH SUGGESTIONS ON
TACTICS FOR HANDLING THESE POINTS DURING AMBASSADOR SMITH'S
VISIT JUNE 26-30.

2. HEU FOR SAFARI I. SAG'S MOST IMMEDIATE NEED IS HIGHLY
ENRICHED URANIUM FOR THE SAFARI RESEARCH REACTOR. SA
NEGOTIATORS MAY ARGUE THAT THEY CANNOT WAIT FOR THE
COMPLETION OF RESEARCH AND FUEL FABRICATION OF MEDIUM OR
LOW ENRICHED URANIUM. WHILE THE VISIT OF OUR TECHNICAL
TEAM DELT WITH THE PROBLEM EARLIER THIS YEAR, THE
SAG NEVER GAVE US A SPECIFIC REACTION. IT WILL BE

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IMPORTANT THAT AMBASSADOR SMITH'S TEAM HAVE THE VERY
LATEST DATA AND ESTIMATES OF WHEN LOWER ENRICHED FUEL
COULD BE AVAILABLE FOR USE IN SAFARI I. SINCE THERE WILL
BE A GAP BETWEEN THE RUN-DOWN OF ANY REMAINING CAPACITY
IN SAFARI I AND THE POSSIBLE START-UP WITH LOWER ENRICHED
FUEL, WE WILL NEED TO ADVANCE SOME SORT OF PLAN TO
MAINTAIN AT LEAST MINIMAL SAFARI I OPERATION UNTIL THE

NEW TYPE OF FUEL IS AVAILABLE, SUBJECT TO AGREED CONDITIONS. WHILE THIS HAS SOMETIMES BEEN DESCRIBED AS A "TOKEN" SHIPMENT OF HEU TO SHOW OUR GOOD FAITH, IT WOULD BE BETTER TO DESCRIBE IT AS A "MINIMAL CONVERSION LOAD" TO CARRY OUT AN AGREED CONVERSION OF THE REACTOR FROM HEU TO MEU/LEU. IT SHOULD BE CLEAR THAT SUCH A MINIMAL CONVERSION LOAD COULD NOT BE SHIPPED UNTIL THE SAG HAD FORMALLY PROCLAIMED ITS INTENTION OF THE NECESSARY CONSTITUTIONAL STEPS TO ADHERE TO THE NPT. CONCEIVABLY, THE FUEL COULD BE LEASED, WITH CLEAR PROVISION THAT THE SPENT FUEL RODS MUST BE RETURNED AS USG PROPERTY.

3. LEU FOR KOEBURG. A US-GUARANTEED SUPPLY OF LOW-ENRICHED URANIUM FOR THE KOEBURG POWER REACTOR WOULD NOT APPEAR TO PRESENT A MAJOR PROBLEM IF WE COULD REACH AN OVERALL AGREEMENT ON US-SOUTH AFRICAN NUCLEAR RELATIONS WHICH MEETS THE REQUIREMENTS OF OUR NEW LEGISLATION AND HAS SPECIFIC CONGRESSIONAL SANCTION. THE MAJOR PROBLEM HERE WOULD BE TO INCLUDE SOME BUILT-IN GUARANTEE THAT THE US WOULD OPPOSE ANY INTERNATIONAL SANCTION THAT WOULD REQUIRE IT TO BREAK ITS FUEL-SUPPLY COMMITMENT. IN THE ABSENCE OF AN IMPROBABLE OVERALL IMPROVEMENT IN US-SOUTH AFRICAN RELATIONS, IT SEEMS UNLIKELY THAT ANYTHING SHORT OF A CONGRESSIONALLY APPROVED AGREEMENT IN WRITING WOULD SATISFY THE SOUTH AFRICANS ON THIS POINT.

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4. REPROCESSING SPENT FUEL. THIS APPEARS TO BE A BROADER NUCLEAR ISSUE WHICH WE SHOULD APPROACH IN A MANNER CONSISTENT WITH OUR POLICY TOWARD OTHER USERS OF NUCLEAR FUEL. PRESUMABLY WE COULD INCLUDE SOUTH AFRICA IN SOLUTIONS WE WORK OUT ELSEWHERE, PROVIDED WE CAN REACH AN OVERALL AGREEMENT WHICH INCLUDES NPT ADHERENCE AND FUEL INTERNATIONAL CONTROLS.

5. SAFEGUARDS FOR THE SECRECY OF SOUTH AFRICA'S ENRICHMENT PROCESS. OUR TECHNICAL TEAM ADDRESSED THIS QUESTION EARLIER WITHOUT FORMAL RESPONSE FROM THE SAG. WE DO NOT KNOW AT THIS TIME WHETHER THEY WILL HAVE ANY COMMENTS TO MAKE ON OUR EARLIER PROPOSALS, BUT WE SHOULD REGARD THE BALL AS IN THEIR COURT. WE SHOULD REAFFIRM OUR DESIRE TO RESPECT THE SECRECY OF COMMERCIALY EXPLOITABLE TECHNICAL PROCEDURES BUT INSIST THAT WE CANNOT ALLOW THIS TO BE USED AS AN EXCUSE TO EXEMPT ANY INSTALLATION FROM REASONABLE INTERNATIONAL NONPROLIFERATION CONTROLS.

6. AN IAEA GOVERNING COUNCIL SEAT FOR SOUTH AFRICA. WE HAVE ALREADY USED OUR FULL INFLUENCE ON THIS ISSUE WITHOUT SUCCESS AND CANNOT GUARANTEE SA ANY DIFFERENT RESULT IN THE FUTURE. SA MAY ASK THAT WE ASSURE THEM THAT

WE WILL NOT ABANDON SUCH EFFORTS BUT THEY WILL PROBABLY NOT MAKE THIS A STICKING POINT IF AGREEMENT CAN BE REACHED ON OTHER ISSUES. IT WILL UNQUESTIONABLY COLOR THEIR ATTITUDE TOWARD IAEA INVOLVEMENT IN SAFEGURDS PROCEDURES, BUT WE SEE NO SOLUTION HERE TO THEIR DESIRE TO BE RESTORED TO A SEAT ON THE IAEA GOVERNING COUNCIL, UNLESS THE IAEA WERE TO ABANDON REGIONAL SEATS ALTOGETHER AND INCLUDE A SET NUMBER OF MOST ADVANCED NUCLEAR STATES ON A WORLD-WIDE BASIS. EVEN THAT MIGHT NOT OVERCOME THE ANTI-SOUTH AFRICAN BIAS OF MOST IAEA MEMBERS.

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S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 CAPE TOWN 1165

EXDIS

7. THE EXPORT OF NON-SENSITIVE EQUIPMENT FOR SOUTH AFRICA'S URANIUM ENRICHMENT PLANT IS A POINT THE SAG HAS RAISED BEFORE. WE ARE NOT CERTAIN WHETHER THIS IS SIMPLY A QUESTION OF DISAGREEMENT WITH THE US OVER ARTICLE 4 OF THE NPT, HOWEVER, OR WHETHER THE SAG SEEKS BROADER ASSURANCES CONCERNING RESTRICTIONS ON EXPORTS OF EQUIPMENT FOR SOUTH AFRICA'S ENRICHMENT PLANT. AMBASSADOR SMITH'S TEAM MIGHT CHECK WITH THE DEPT OF COMMERCE TO ASCERTAIN WHETHER WE ARE IN FACT BEING MORE RESTRICTIVE ON ENRICHMENT-RELATED SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT FOR SOUTH AFRICA THAN WE ARE FOR OTHER COUNTRIES. IF SO, THE SAG MAY HAVE A VALID POINT ON WHICH IT WOULD UNDERSTANDABLY WANT ASSURANCES BEFORE COMMITTING ITSELF TO THE NPT. ONE POSSIBLE FORMULA FOR MEETING SOUTH AFRICA'S CONCERN, THOUGH NOT STATED IN COMPLIMENTARY TERMS, WOULD BE TO ASSURE IT OF "LEAST FAVORED NATION" TREATMENT IF IT ADHERED TO THE NPT AND INSTITUTED INTERNATIONAL CONTROLS ON VALINDABA, ASSUMING WE COULD GIVE ASSURANCE THAT SA WOULD BE TREATED NO LESS FAVORABLY THAN ANY OTHER NATION WITH WHICH THE US MAINTAINS A NUCLEAR RELATIONSHIP.

8. OPPOSITION TO ESCALATED PRESSURES ON SOUTH AFRICA IN THE UNSC. THIS IS THE LEAST EXPLICIT BUT MOST DIFFICULT OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN POINTS TO DEAL WITH. ALTHOUGH WE HAVE
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TWO SLIGHTLY DIFFERENT VERSIONS OF THIS FROM JACOMET, ONE INDICATING THAT FOURIE DID NOT SPECIFICALLY CALL FOR OPPOSITION TO PRESSURES AGAINST APARTHEID OR SOUTH AFRICAN POLITICAL POLICIES, THE IMPLICATION IS THAT SOUTH AFRICA WOULD EXPECT THE WESTERN SC MEMBERS TO OPPOSE THE FURTHER USE OR THREAT OF SANCTIONS. THIS CAN ONLY BE CLEARED UP BY FURTHER TALKS. IF THE SAG IS CONCERNED ABOUT TRADE EMBARGOES THAT WOULD NECESSARILY INCLUDE GUARANTEED NUCLEAR SUPPLIES, THEN IT IS RAISING A POINT TOUCHED UPON IN PARA 3 ABOVE AND ALSO RELEVANT TO PARA 7. IF THE SAG ARGUES THAT THE WESTERN POWERS MUST OPPOSE ANY EMBARGOES, EVEN THOSE FROM WHICH NUCLEAR FUEL AND PERHAPS OTHER SPECIFIED NUCLEAR COMPONENTS WERE EXEMPTED, THEN IT WOULD BE MAKING ITS DEMANDS MUCH BROADER. WE DO NOT KNOW IF AMBASSADOR SMITH'S INSTRUCTIONS WILL COVER THIS OVERALL POINT, OR EVEN THE FIRST PART OF IT, BUT IT WILL ALMOST CERTAINLY BE RAISED, AND THE SOUTH AFRICANS ARE UNLIKELY TO NEGOTIATE SERIOUSLY UNTIL WE CAN DEAL WITH THEIR CONCERN THAT ANY ASSURANCES WE GIVE THEM CAN BE WIPED OUT BY OUR OWN ACTIONS IN THE SECURITY COUNCIL.

9. IF SAG APPROACH IS TO DEMAND POLITICAL ASSURANCES GOING BEYOND THEIR CONCERN ABOUT BEING DISCRIMINATED AGAINST IN NUCLEAR MATTERS, IT WOULD SEEM BEST FOR AMBASSADORHEMITH TO SAY THAT, WHILE HE WILL CERTAINLY REPORT THE POSITION TAKEN BY THE SAG, HE DOES NOT BELIEVE THE US WOULD BE PREPARED TO LINK OUR NUCLEAR CONCERNS WITH SUCH OPEN-ENDED POLITICAL DEMANDS SINCE

OUR OVERALL POLITICAL RELATIONS ARE SO CLEARLY A FUNCTION OF SOUTH AFRICA'S ACTIONS IN THE FIELD OF HUMAN RIGHTS ABOUT WHICH AMBASSADOR SMITH IS NOT MANDATED TO NEGOTIATE OR DISCUSS.

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